# ROLE OF WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY ON PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND PROFESSIONAL WELL-BEING AMONG ACADEMICIANS : A STUDY IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

## SYNOPSIS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Everybody on this planet desire to have a good life. There is an adage that states that '*Health is Wealth*' which means that unless we are physically and mentally fit from within, we won't be able to actively perform our daily activities at home and also at our workplace. Money alone cannot buy happiness.Our health influences our well-being and vice-versa. Therefore we must enhance our well-being in the quest for a 'better' life. The "World Health Organization" (WHO) states that "*Well-being exists in two dimensions, subjective and objective. It comprises an individual's experience of their life as well as a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values*". In their bestseller, *Well-Being: The Five essential elements,* authors Tom Rath and Jim Harter, have mentioned about five interrelated dimensions of well-being (physical, social, community, financial and career well-being) after investigating assorted cultures and people from 150 nations worldwide that were influential in shaping their lives. They imagined life as a complete puzzle and like the pieces of a puzzle the various dimensions of well-being when united assist us to create a blissful and contented life striking the right work-life balance between home and professional lives. An individual works in an organization with the primary objective of earning his livelihood, supporting his family, upgrading his standard of living and through his performance at workplace he is ultimately serving his

society. Therefore his main aim is family well-being and in a broader sense of societal well-being. Social well-being is a state where the basic human needs are fulfilled and people coexist peacefully in communities with opportunities for advancement.

Nowadays organizations confront fierce competition from both national and international firms delineated by assiduous work and a fast-paced working environment. Majority of organizations dispense their quality time and capital into the realizing and encouraging diversity within their organizations. Despite all the comforts and worldly accomplishments, individuals experience a sense of loss and futility. The sense of dejection permeates through all aspects of life including one's professional life. The mounting stress of our professional lives have espoused the need for our wellness. Employers are struggling hard to strike a balance between the generational differences in their workforce. Contemporary organizations are incessantly making efforts to instill transcendent values at their workplace with the aim of fostering a work culture that nurtures and enriches their positive emotions, morale, and character. Therefore, 21st-century organizations are undergoing a metamorphosis as employees venture to investigate the psychological facets at the workplace with an intent to derive gratification from their tasks. Sustaining and improving well-being at workplace proves to be valuable to humanities by aiding employees of organizations to feel happy and gratified in their roles. The concept of spirituality at the workplace have suddenly facade in modern organizations as a huge number of working professionals very often feel emotionally detached and isolated at work and experience an emptiness in their job assignments (Honiball, 2014). At one side, 'individual spirituality' embraces the customized values that an individual carry with oneself to work (Karakas, 2010), while on the other side 'organizational spirituality' imitates one's personal cognizance of human values in an organization (Pawar, 2009). Therefore individual values must be aligned with organizational values to derive the maximum fulfillment at the workplace. We need to exploit the potential of our employees through the pathway of moral enlightenment which will lead to better productivity and work-life integration in all

organization. India, our motherland, is the culmination of religion and philosophy, but as a matter of fact discrimination, dishonesty, compliance, and occupational stress are still grave issues in many institutions and organizations in our country. This has in fact compelled to introduce the notion of WS so as to create integrity and vigor among employees which would lead to improved work-life balance and enhanced productivity. Organizations must devise strategies to fortify and strengthen the intellectual prowess and psychological needs of employees so that workers start realizing and eloquently disperse work as a spiritual path, develop interpersonal relationships with their peers, maintain their veracity everywhere and the spotlight is on the betterment of society. Organizations must excogitate creative strategies to handle freakish challenges like the recent COVID pandemic and focus upon workplace well-being (Varshney and Varshney, 2020; Storme et al., 2020; Trachsler and Jong, 2020).

Working professionals need to improve upon their psychological resources in order to emerge victorious thereby contributing towards sustainable development. These four variables i.e. self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience come under one umbrella as psychological capital. Positive psychological capital (PPC) when implemented in a positive organizational work environment, endorse constructive ideas that can confront and reinstate innate suppositions and thoughts in the near future. This search for a change inculcates a positive organizational climate that nurtures, motivates employees, enhances their potential, sense of control which ultimately improves employee well-being.

### 1.1. The significance of the research on workplace spirituality, well-being and positive psychological capital among academic professionals in the higher education sector in the Indian context

The world is facing unexpected challenges and opportunities in various areas. All these challenges need to be resolved by undertaking an interdisciplinary approach. The modern psychologists realized the call for embracing an optimistic approach that concentrates on the improvement of both people and organizations (Luthans et al., 2009). Although the existing

powers are propelling human beings towards taking a pessimistic approach, this particular discipline is trying hard to divert from the focal point of learning unproductive activities to the growth of strong people (Luthans et al., 2007). Individual and communal wellness is improved when the requirement for sovereignty, proficiency, and connectedness is rewarded. Several researches have been conducted in the corporate sector to approve the constructive benefits of embracing spirituality at workplaces for augmenting employee wellness, work performance, human resource effectiveness and organizational productivity (Jeon and Choi, 2021; Rabell and Bastons, 2020; Mas-Machuca and Marimon, 2019; Milliman et al., 2018; Jena and Pradhan, 2018).The significance of the present research in the Indian higher education context initiated from the fact that there lies a necessity to create an equivalence in the lifestyle of Indian workforce as our country has been the product of two diverse traditions one that is poignant and ingrained in typical agrarian philosophy and the other that is cognitive and attracted towards evolving technology. Positive psychology's main happenings conform to the western view of personality and self-identity as being open, meaningful and self-directed in that fading to be mindful of our tradition that considers oneself to be courteous, subservient, and responsible filled with gratitude. In our tradition, the idea of individuality is comprehensive and naturally wider (Christopher & Hickinbottom, 2008).

Higher education in India has evolved quite considerably since our country attained freedom. The sole aim of higher education is to work towards nation building through the provision of complete, integrated, trans-cultural and high-quality education and being the global front-runner in holistic education through nurturing of talent and right human values. Today's students must be equipped with an impartial, innovative and self-regulating mind to provide solutions to such unpredictable challenges. The top managerial officials, administrators and planners of higher education institutions now need to understand the shortcomings of the education sector and accordingly brainstorm on where and how they should move forward to achieve success in the long run. With the vision of making India a superpower by 2020, it is

indispensable that India's most valuable asset i.e. her enormous youth base, is knowledgeable and capable, so that it can contribute its maximum to the nation. Universities should aim at providing holistic education at all levels in all modern disciplines, even gauging futuristic and emerging frontiers of knowledge, learning, and research to develop the overall personality of the students. The responsibility of educating the young mindsets rests with the teachers who mold the thinking process of the students. Teachers are bestowed with the prime duty of building the moral character of students, concerned about their well-being and help them in their career development. At the same time, it is our duty to look after the well-being of teachers also and take actions to improve their professional well-being by reducing their occupational stress and other job-related factors.

Teaching is an on-going, ever-evolving process and as a result, the higher education sector all over the world has been compelled to embrace dynamic approaches concerning the selection of highly qualified faculties, setting benchmark for admission criteria, adoption of innovative technological content-delivery pedagogies, hands-on syllabus, excellent infrastructure and execution of performance appraisal system. Teaching is considered as one of the most demanding profession. The arduous environment of the teaching occupation combined with weakening in connectedness specifies that academicians crave for both significance and sense of community at the workplace. Individuals persistently seek contentment and professional excellence that cannot be satisfied by an isolated individual since people belong to a community. Spirituality strengthens meaningful work by working together in groups or teams (Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2009). Employees spend most of their time at the workplace as part of their daily routine. Therefore, employees need to be empowered by positive psychological resources in order to get accustomed with the dynamic and flexible working environment (Pulakos et al., 2000). Effective employees have the ability to forecast obstacles and utilize contingency programs to subdue those obstacles (Bamberger, 2009).These findings highlighted the advocacy of the construct of positive psychological capital (PPC) in

having an overriding effect upon employees and organizations breeding positive performance at workplace. Studies pertaining to PPC are in nascent stage and hence it is inevitable to explore the various facets of PPC in promoting employees' professional well-being. Therefore, professional well-being has become quite relevant in the present times than general well-being. Professional well-being characterized by professional aptitude, work motivation, acclimatization with the working environment, self-confidence aid in achieving success. The focus must be on the teachers' professional well-being (TPW) as they are the pillars of our education system.

Academic institutions must nurture an inclusive environment where everyone can develop their aptitude and serve the society as a whole. Universities must cater to the diverse, individual and professional growth needs of its constituents and encourage the habit of engagement, caring, and civic responsibility by emphasizing a strong connection between service, excellence, and career growth. Learning organizations are desperate to cultivate teaching professionals those who have the zeal to nurture themselves fast and create a positive halo around them. Presently, very few research have focussed on teachers' work attitudes and professional well-being in diverse cultural context (Soliman et al., 2021; Fedorov et al., 2020). Recently, few studies made a conscious effort to link workplace spirituality with teaching effectiveness in the Indian cultural context (Paul et al., 2020; Sharma and Kumra, 2020).It is quite relevant and a necessity arises to introduce spirituality in educational institutions. The entire education system needs to be revamped and focus must be on the teachers' professional well-being (TPW) and students' wellness as they are the pillars of an education system. Education is a core sector of employment that provides the best human resource capital for social and business endeavors. Therefore, spirituality in academic organizations is inevitable.

Extant research on workplace spirituality (WS) have mostly ventured into the corporate and manufacturing sector and very few service sector organizations. With a vision to expand the practical applications of WS in other domains, this present study have thrown insights upon

integrating spirituality into the higher institutes of learning thereby exploring the function of WS on the professional well-being of academicians in the Indian context.

## 2. GAP AREAS

Based on literature review and previous empirical works, it has been prophesized that the magnitude of WS actively participate in achieving professional well-being of teaching professionals. The aim of the present study is to throw an insight into integrating spirituality in academic organizations. In the current research framework, we have conceptualized the dimensions of WS (Spiritual orientation, compassion, meaningful work and alignment of values) and teachers' professional well-being (joy of teaching, connectedness, teaching efficacy) keeping all the dimensions under one umbrella. The variable under this framework is found to be unified and are derived from existing and budding literature on human resource functioning. The primary goal of this study is to approach contemporary requirements for nurturing its most valuable living resource in education sector-teaching professionals. Initially, we must try to clarify and institute the causal rapport among workplace spirituality and professional well-being. From previous findings, we arrive at the plausible research which requires due attention. Initially, it is necessary to elucidate and institute the causal link between workplace spirituality and professional well-being of teachers in the Indian context. Secondly, it is to determine the mediating relation of PPC between WS on the dimensions of teachers' professional well-being i.e joy of teaching, connectedness and teaching efficacy.

A set of research gap areas that have been identified are as follows:

1. Various doctoral scholars have noted the implications of WS on distinct results (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Fry (2005) has described that "*workplace spirituality is a new topic in the organizational literature which is having a limited theoretical development*". Saas (2000) has unequivocally mentioned that "*the emerging body of academic literature on spirituality in organizations exhibits more breadth than the depth. At the same time, substantive efforts are expected from researchers for developing empirical measurement*

*tools on workplace spirituality that may provide sufficient evidence to support workplace effectiveness"* (Baker, 2015). Various authors have cited that the definitions of workplace spirituality are lacking harmony which poses a major barrier to comprehending workplace spirituality (Saas, 2000; Baker, 2015).

2. Incorporating or creating WS in organizations employees will get an opportunity to work within a positive environment. Such a positive organizational climate enables employees to remain committed to their duties (Zhang & Jia, 2010). A study has deliberated that spiritual organizations have soaring ideals of honesty, righteousness, empathy, accountability, and faith (Jurkiewicz & Giacalone, 2004). Although the effect of WS on workers' well-being is not tested in this research, several studies have remarked on the relationship of both constructs.

3. The integration of spirituality in work settings apart from providing inner inspiration cultivates good bonding among peers. When employees are loyal to their organization it ultimately results in enhanced dedication and personal contentment (Yen & Neihoff, 2004; Lee & Kims, 2010; Pradhan et al., 2016). Therefore, we can presume that workplace spirituality may encourage compassionate behavior, which is beneficial for cultivating professional well-being among faculties.

4. Personal differences and traditions of organizations depicting the changes between the variables of OCB and personal well-being variables are probably going to enrich the information for both academic staff. Secondly, several kinds of research have been done looking at the correlation of many stress factors that employees experience and the effects of stress on their achievements and mental health. However, drawing from previous literature review, research considering spirituality as a potential future positive psychological tool to promote well-being among teaching professionals need to be explored.

5. Pandey and his team members have predicted the positive relation between spiritual climate and learning (Pandey, Gupta, & Kumar, 2016) and innovative behavior in teams (Pandey, Gupta, & Gupta, 2017). Future research endeavor should, therefore, focus on the effect of spirituality as a positive psychological capital tool to improve the performance of teachers in the academic field to cope up with occupational stress thereby recommending various stress-coping techniques that helps in enhancing their effectiveness and well-being of at academic work and also in predicting desirable job outcomes.

6. There has been a rising interest in spirituality in the corporate sector in the last few decades but a dearth of empirical studies backed by proper scientific validation in the higher education sector focusing on augmenting the emotional and spiritual intelligence of teachers in the academic workplace. At the same time, psychological fulfillment of emotions being an innate part of a teaching professional can serve as a potential mediator between workplace spirituality and teachers' professional well-being. Lack of research establishing the relationship between workplace spirituality, psychological capital, and teachers' professional well-being in the higher education sector has put a momentum to explore this promising area as a part of our doctoral journey.

## 3. AIM OF THE RESEARCH

Based on a review of literature and gap analysis, the following research objectives have been developed for the study:

a)To have an insight about the spirituality amongst the academic professionals in institutes of higher learning in Indian context.

b)To study the association among workplace spirituality and professional well-being of teachers in the higher education sector in the Indian context.

c)To scrutinize the mediating role of psychological capital between workplace spirituality and professional well-being of academic professionals.

d)To know the benefits of integrating spirituality in the institutes of higher learning.

## 4. OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE CONSTRUCTS

The construct of workplace spirituality (WS) has been operationalized by Pradhan et al. (2017) definition which focuses on the dimension of '*spiritual orientation* (SO)' (inclination for attaining divine wisdom), '*compassion* (CM)' (being helpful to others), '*meaningful work* (MW)' (signifies higher purpose related to individual tasks) and *'alignment with organizational values* (AV)' (alignment of personal values with organization's visionary goals) relevant for teaching professionals working in higher academic institutions.

The construct of teachers' professional well-being (TPW) has been conceptualized by Renshaw, Long and Cook's (2015) definition which comprises of factors namely, '*joy of teaching* (JT)', '*connectedness* (CN)' and '*teaching efficacy* (TE)' applied to teaching professionals employed in higher educational institutions in the Indian cultural context. TPW comprises of resources designed to help teachers at workplace like staying fit, working with vigor, maintaining a better work-life balance, earning respect, nurturing positive relations with others, achieving authentic goals, and beaming with self-confidence to smartly face unprecedented challenges and also the ability to bounce back from failures.

The construct of positive psychological capital (PPC) defined by Luthans et al. (2007) has been operationalized by '*hope*(H)', '*self-efficacy* (SE)', '*optimism* (OP)', and '*resilience* (RE)' relevant for teaching professionals in the Indian context.

## 5. DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### *5.1. Workplace Spirituality and Teachers' Professional Well-being*

The philosophical traditions of spirituality defined by righteousness originated in India and slowly propagated to the West (Radhakrishnan, 1914).Spirituality offered enough divine

wisdom for the development of ethical backbone of contemporary management. The growing interest of spirituality was attributed to alterations in the work environment, which caused the employees to yearn for higher purpose in their lives (Hicks, 2003).Although spirituality is an abstract concept, several researchers have realized the importance of providing sense to work that validated the capacity for transcendence through promoting sovereignty, wisdom, and dignity (Wortham and Wortham, 2007; Sison et al., 2016). *Meaningful work* designates the extent to which employees remain engrossed in their work. *Sense of community* refers to creating good rapport at workplace. *Inner life* is enriched by the presence of spiritual consciousness which assists the employees to execute activities at work (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000).Teaching professionals who are spiritually inclined towards divine wisdom convey that to their pupils through their mentoring and teaching aptitude, exhibit compassion to students and fellow faculties when needed, develop good interpersonal relationships with them, seek meaningfulness in their teaching work assignments and finally align their own interests with those of the institutions' visionary goals.

Well-being is a multidimensional concept which integrates idiosyncratic, societal, physical, mental and health-related behaviors.Well-being can be approached from two viewpoints. On one hand, the hedonistic view equates well-being with happiness and positive search of human craving, while the eudemonism focuses on realizing the true potential of individuals.From the hedonistic perspective, psychological well-being (PWB) implies a positive frame of mind where persons experience positive emotions, higher level of contentment and personal fulfillment (Diener, 2000).Prior scientific investigation proves that PWB plays a vital role on employees' decisions concerning strategies, work satisfaction (Pradhan et al., 2017); employee engagement (Sivapragasam and Raya, 2017), job performance and turnover (Bryson et al., 2017), work attendance (Wright, 2010), emotional and physical health (Carver et al., 2010), complete satisfaction in professional life (Diener, 2000). Adults spend most of their time at workplace as part of their daily routine. Therefore, workplace well-

being has become quite relevant in the present times than general well-being.There is a lack of experiential research to substantiate the linkage between WS and the professional well-being of working professionals in the education sector. Professional burnout is a condition of emotional fatigue, scepticism, and low sense of individual accomplishment in response to enduring work-related stressor.Therefore, an emphasis on positive psycho-social factors and enhancement of inner psychological resources, ethical human values and virtues may act as a shield from the numerous challenges. Extant literature is lacking in studies that deliberately focuses on the positive strengths and approaches related to professional well-being. Few studies have concentrated upon the workplace well-being and happiness of teaching professionals (Calabrese et al., 2010; Benevene et al., 2018). Therefore, we can postulate the following subsequent hypothesis:

**H1**: Workplace Spirituality (WS) positively influences teachers' professional well-being (TPW).

*5.2. Workplace Spirituality and Positive Psychological Capital*

The notion of psychological capital originated from the field of positive psychological scholarship (POS) which firmly believed that when we concentrate upon the inner true potential of employees and their capabilities it proves to be valuable for both individuals and their concerned organizations. Positive psychological capital (PPC) focuses on the positive traits of persons which assist them to accomplish better performance at workplace (Luthans and Yousef, 2004). PPC is primarily concerned about the behavioral issues of organizations and comprises of a cluster of four resources (hope, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience) (Luthans et al., 2007).Organizations have gradually embraced spirituality at workplace (Weinberg and Locander, 2014). Baykal and Zehir (2018) explored the mediating role of PPC on the relationship between spiritual leadership and employee work performance in the Turkish context and found that followers who work under the influence of spiritual leadership

experience enhanced PPC and that leads to better accomplishment. Corporate organizations are frenetically seeking enthusiastic employees who persistently work with sheer devotion. In academic field, Feng (2016) in his study observed teachers' insights on principals' authentic leadership and the relationship of authentic leadership to teachers' psychological capital in Taiwan. The basic needs and purposes of teaching professionals is both rethinking the learning purposes and nurturing a rewarding life for students. When teacher's holistic values are united with organization's goals, then one feels psychologically active to work with an optimistic mindset, strive for teaching excellence and initiate the creation of a positive work ambience. Hence, we propose the subsequent hypothesis as follows:

**H2**: Workplace spirituality positively influences Positive Psychological Capital (PPC)

*5.3. Mediating role of positive psychological capital*

The mediation effect is created when a third variable/construct intervenes between two other related constructs (Baron and Kenny, 1986). In the present study, workplace spirituality encourages teaching professionals to expand a range of resources, together with psychological resources, such as positive psychological capital (PPC), which eventually facilitates to be successful and gain a sense of triumph thus developing their professional well-being. As the study assumes a direct relationship between WS, PPC and TPW, it also tenable that PPC plays the role of a mediator influencing the relationship between WS and TPW. Therefore, the study posits that teaching professionals who are spiritually cognizant and have positive psychological capital resources at the academic workplace, would enhance their professional well-being. Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated:

**H3:** PPC will mediate the relationship between WS and TPW

The conceptual framework is shown in **Figure 1** below:

**Independent Variable** **Dependent Variable**

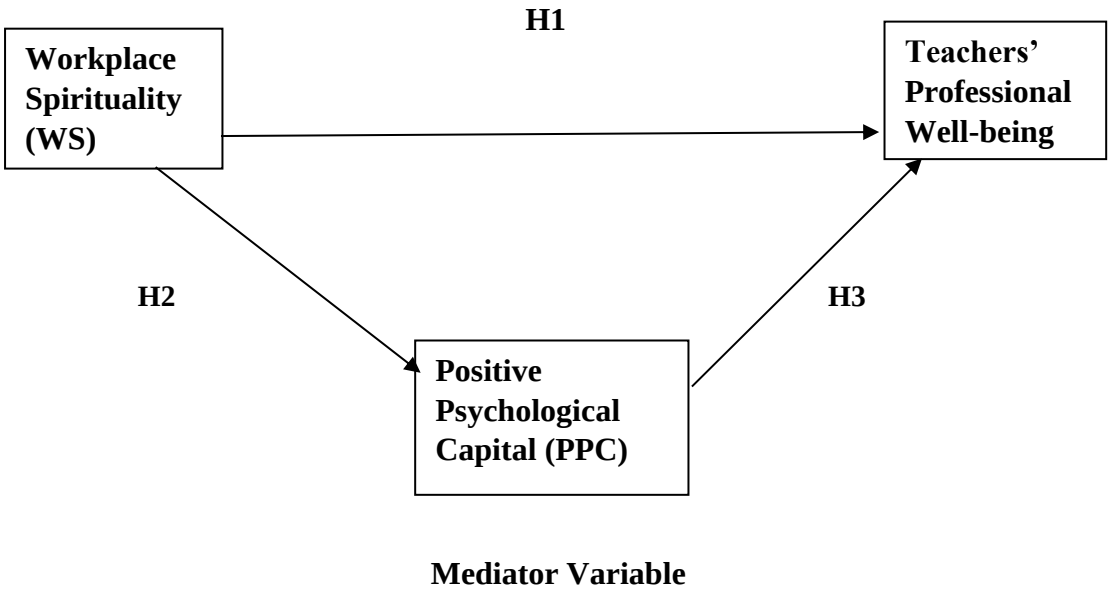


**Figure1. The Conceptual Framework Model**

## 6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### *6.1. Sampling procedure*

The target population considered for this present study were teaching professionals employed in higher educational institutions(HEI) in India. A non-probabilistic sampling technique

(*snowball sampling*) was preferred to select the sample. The offline field survey was conducted when the researcher individually administered the survey questionnaire to respondents after obtaining permissions from the Head of Departments (HODs) of respective engineering and management departments of universities, Academic Deans of B-Schools for the smooth conduct of the survey research. The researcher personally visited higher educational institutions in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, and selected regions of West Bengal. The Academic Deans of respective HEI gave permission letters to approach the esteemed faculty members and they co-operated by filling up the survey questionnaire. The researcher made effort to explain to the esteemed educators about the purpose and significance of the present study in contemporary times. Academicians with varying levels of teaching experience, designations, and educational qualifications were considered for the study. Due to the paucity of time and engagement of faculty members in various teaching and administrative work assignments, the researchers often handed over the hard copies of the questionnaires to the educators and maybe after one week or two weeks collected the responses from them accordingly.

With an aim to obtain responses from teaching professionals from rest of India apart from state of Odisha and West Bengal, the survey questionnaire was posted online on social media platforms, professional networks like LinkedIn, Facebook, etc, for getting more responses. Further, the questionnaire was forwarded to several individual contacts for extending the coverage of our digital survey. Even familiar target participants from various academic organizations in higher education were approached and pleaded to complete the survey. After persistent follow-up exercises for two and half months, we got the complete digital responses. The entire survey comprising of both field survey and an online survey was carried out and a total of 345 responses from teaching professionals employed in HEI were gathered after taking their informed consent. The characteristics of the sample respondents are given in Table1 below.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of Sample Respondents (N=345)

| SL. No. | Demographic Variables | | No. | Percentage (%) | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Age | | 345 | | 39.23 |
| 2 | Gender | Male | 250 | 72.5 | 1.28 |
| | | Female | 95 | 27.5 | |
| 3 | Marital Status | Single | 67 | 19.4 | 1.81 |
| | | Married | 278 | 80.6 | |
| 4 | Educational qualification/Level of Education | UG | 4 | 1.2 | 2.59 |
| | | PG | 142 | 41.2 | |
| | | Doctorate | 189 | 54.8 | |
| | | Post-Doctorate | 10 | 2.9 | |
| 5 | Stream | Engineering | 250 | 72.5 | 1.28 |
| | | Management | 93 | 27.0 | |
| | | Art/Science/ Humanities | 2 | 0.6 | |
| 6 | Teaching Experience | Less than 5 years | 103 | 29.9 | 1.96 |
| | | 5 years to 15 years | 176 | 51.0 | |
| | | 16 years to 25 years | 44 | 12.8 | |
| | | More than 25 years | 22 | 6.4 | |
| 7 | Present designation | Lecturer | 4 | 1.2 | 2.35 |
| | | Assistant Professor | 258 | 74.8 | |
| | | Associate Professor | 40 | 11.6 | |
| | | Professor | 43 | 12.5 | |
| 8 | Type of Higher Educational Institution (HEI) | Govt-aided | 21 | 6.1 | 1.94 |
| | | Private | 324 | 93.9 | |

*6.2. Measures.*

*WS:* The current study has used a standardized WS scale developed for Indian manufacturing organizations proposed by (Pradhan et al., 2017) but the scale has been modified for catering to the needs of teaching professionals working in the higher education sector in the Indian context. Two items in the scale were reverse coded.

*PPC:* The 24-item Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) was used to measure the Positive Psychological Capital (PPC) construct (Luthans et al., 2007). The PCQ scale comprised of four elements namely, hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism with each component assessed by 6, 6, 8, 4 items respectively. Two items were reverse coded.

*TPW:* Renshaw et al. (2015) developed a teachers' well-being questionnaire. The current study has used the same scale for determining the professional well-being of academicians working in the higher education sector in the Indian context.

The detailed description of measuring scales and their corresponding reliability are given in Table 2 below:

**Table 2.** Detailed description of measuring scales and their reliability

| **Variable** | **No. of Items** | **No. of Items remained** | **Cronbach Alpha(α)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Workplace Spirituality (WS) | 30 | 30 | 0.936 |
| Positive Psychological Capital (PPC) | 24 | 24 | 0.859 |
| Teachers Professional Well-being (TPW) | 12 | 12 | 0.868 |

**Legends: WS**- Workplace Spirituality, **PPC**- Positive Psychological Capital, **TPW**- Teachers' Professional Well-being

*6.3. Data collection method*

The target participants were instructed to select responses on a five-point Likert type scale on the basis of their most appropriate choice (1= Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree).

*6.4. Analysis and results*

The data were analyzed through the co-variance based Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique with the help of application software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 and IBM SPSS Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 24.0. SPSS reported the descriptive statistics, correlation results and reliability of the scales through the determination

of Cronbach alpha(α) value. The Cronbach alpha (α) of WS, PPC and TPW scales of the research study were found to be 0.936, 0.859 and 0.868 respectively. The convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs were examined by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) through AMOS. The Goodness of Fit indices provided by IBM SPSS AMOS 24.0 were used for reporting the fitness of the model (Arbuckle amd Wothke, 1999). The overall measurement model was validated through the Average variance extracted (AVE) method and in the next phase the structural model was tested, mediation analysis was done and the final conclusions regarding their acceptance were proposed.

## 7. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study are reliable since it corroborated the existence of the noteworthy influence of WS on TPW and further validated the mediating role of PPC at academic workplace. PPC partially mediated the relationship between the two constructs. Teaching professionals who are spiritually conscious find happiness in their teaching, remain well connected with their students and peers at workplace. Educators with high teaching efficacy (TE) can handle their stress effectively, when they believe in their self-worth and innate potential. Self-efficacious teachers are found to experience reduced burnout and exhibited better teaching performance at workplace (Csiernik and Adams, 2002; Evers et al., 2002). A greater degree of spiritual awareness lowers mental depression and increase teacher resilience and optimism (Koenig, 2010; McCoubrie and Davies, 2006). Spiritual attitude results in self-acceptance, better relationships, higher sense of freedom thereby ensuring personal growth and realistic outlook of the working environment (Khasab et al., 2015). Spirituality attenuated workplace stress and mediated the association between transitional leadership and mental well-being of employees (McKee et al., 2011; Arnetz et al., 2013). Spiritual beliefs augment positive emotions, assist to persevere despite challenges. Spirituality serve as an effective tool for minimizing the detrimental effect of workplace stress (Zellers and Perewe, 2003).

## 8. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Embedding a spiritual organizational work culture is crucial for contemporary organizations for fostering innovation, embracing changes, and the betterment of human resources. At the spiritual academic workplace, teaching professionals feel psychologically empowered and exhibit self-reliance and aptitude in their endeavors resulting in innovative teaching. The findings of the present study indicated that PPC served as a mediator between WS and TPW. The results also corroborate with earlier research arguments (Poorkyani et al., 2013; Yang et al., 2019). The current research has meekly tried to relate the three constructs WS, PPC, and TPW through the lens of self-determination theory (SDT). Further, conscious efforts have been made to verify the direct, indirect, and total effects of a predictor variable on the outcome variable both in the presence and absence of mediating variable which added new insights to the extant literature by comprehending its attachments to different managerial implications. The current research has several implications for academicians in higher education both theoretically and also practically. The subsequent sections have elucidated the theoretical and practical implications of the current research.

### *8.1. Theoretical implications*

The present study provides a several theoretical contributions. This study makes a notable contribution towards WS literature in the Indian higher education sector by developing a theoretical framework comprising of different facets of WS and TPW through the lens of *self-determination theory*. Spiritually oriented and self-driven teaching professionals have the inner zeal to strive for academic excellence by having the capacity for decision-making that enhance their professional well-being and assist them in finding happiness at workplace.

The findings of current research has highlighted the influence of WS on joy of teaching (JT) at higher academic workplace. Teaching professionals derive happiness at workplace when they receive good accolades, remuneration for their job. They develop a sense of self-

esteem and experience bliss when they find definite purpose on their job. The findings indicated a plausive association between WS and joy of teaching. It further supports the *broaden-build theory* propounded by Fredrickson (2001) which stated that cultivating positive emotions at workplace brings happiness. Spiritually inclined teaching professionals experience bliss while teaching that enhances their creativity, vigor, diminish conflicts and overall portray a positive stance towards life (Fisher, 2010). The current research findings have shed light on the fact that spirituality promotes sustainable happiness in teaching job unlike other external factors that chiefly contribute to transient state of happiness. Educators who get engrossed in their teaching job roles evoke all means to promoting psychological meaningfulness that leads to organizational prosperity (Inceoglu and Fleck, 2010).

The results supported extant literature which examined that a spiritual work culture promotes enthusiasm and fulfillment among its employees and develop good social bonding with others (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). The connectedness and rapport that teaching professionals develop at academic workplace with students and colleagues impede feelings of loneliness or depression.

Positive psychological capital resources like optimism assist working professionals to have a positive outlook, resilience enables them to overcome challenges and emerge victorious. Efficacious teaching professionals find happiness at work through mentoring students, harmonizing research project activities that imbibe a collaborative mindset and develop cohesion among faculties and students. WS enhanced psychological well-being of school teachers as verified in earlier studies in Indian context (Mahipalan and Sheena,2019).

### *8.2. Practical implications*

The current study holds implications for academic institutions operational in the higher education sector. Contemporary academic institutions are undergoing a colossal transformation that provides teaching professionals with copious chances for professional growth. The recent

COVID pandemic caused a huge paradigm shift in education sector where teachers were compelled to resort to digital platforms and accustom themselves to virtual classroom teaching methods shunning the conventional pedagogy. Recent studies focused on the effect of WS on workforce agility from conceptual viewpoint in higher education (Paul et al., 2020). The current empirical research findings in Indian higher education had a constructive influence of WS on various facets of TPW and further validated the mediating role of PPC. PPC partially mediated the relationship between the two constructs. The study stressed upon professional well-being which has become quite relevant in modern times. The recent pandemic made it essential for teaching professionals to develop their professional well-being. Government aided academic institutions face miscellaneous barriers such as derisory infrastructure facilities, scarcity of assets, competition from private universities and b-schools which have a long-term adverse effect on employee self-esteem and job involvement. These effects coupled with challenging work routines force teaching professionals to be disappointed and dejected at work. Apart from tackling these undesirable effects and embracing remedial measures, one method to efficiently confront this pessimism is fostering a compassionate and divine work atmosphere imbibed with the values of professional ethics, honesty, and assurance.

Organizations can imbibe a holistic work environment in numerous ways. Few organizations have endorsed spirituality through the setting up of meditation centers, activity rooms that encourage creativity and innovation. Academic organizations need to promote measures and frame norms that enhance the consciousness of teaching professionals since it is vital for teachers' professional development and also for the career development of students (Lindholm and Astin, 2006). Educational organizations can organize skill enhacement workshops, seminars, formal training programs delivered by renowned global experts. Even organizing tours to global institutions or organizing academic faculty exchange programs where foreign faculties from world-class institutions might impart lectures and even collaborate with our faculties on important research projects thereby enhancing collaborations. Thus,

proper measures might be implemented to nurture agility among faculties so that they become capable and flexible enough to handle challenging work assignments not only in the Indian context but also overseas. Educational organizations must devise educational policies that upgrade the teaching and research competencies, provide suitable infrastructure and digital library services to access the educational databases of global universities. Keeping teaching professionals engaged in spiritual wellness programs can improve their self-awareness and enlighten divine consciousness to make rational decisions and frame strategies in their daily professional lives. In this manner, faculties will educe a sense of significance at the academic workplace and thereby cultivate teaching efficacy. Further research might consider the role of different variables that might enhance pliable mindset such as contentment, sincerity, and trustfulness, as mediating the relation between academic activities and teaching workforce agility (Muduli, 2018). The findings of our research support the findings of recent studies conducted on workplace spirituality (Sudiro et al., 2021; Soliman et al., 2021; Natapoera and Mangundjaya, 2020)

Keeping aside the interior factors for academicians, external agencies (e.g., NBA, NAAC), norms, and academic-industry convergence also exhibit a significant function in enhancing the professional efficacy and dynamism of the teaching workforce. Definite administrative avenues like assisting in devising strategic decisions at the institutional level are evident in departments; recognition and appreciation for tasks, work-based knowledge platforms, the commencement of institutional contacts or alliance for interior or exterior utilization. Knowledge requirements for faculties such as governmental/regional/institutional norms, research grants, financial budgeting; establishment of quality assurance cells, betterment of communication skills, translation services, cordial relations with clients, networking abilities need to be implemented effectively.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The rising concern must be upon nurturing the personal as well as the mental health of working professionals. Presently, researches are being conducted keeping in mind the spiritual health of employees which significantly enhances their quality of life. Spirituality assists a person to understand the meaningfulness and purpose of their job at the workplace, experience emotional and mental support from colleagues, promote inner connectedness by nurturing long-lasting positive relationships with the environment, and finally to align personal values with organizational values. A true-spirited workplace driven by moral human values gives birth to strong-minded individuals who are trustworthy, can make logical strategic decisions, and are more dynamic than others. When an organization is imbibed with divine principles and values, it will promote employee wellness at the workplace. In absence of sheer devotion and determination, it is rather impossible to accomplish the dream of creating a holistic work environment comprising of contented individuals. WS can boost psychological well-being (Pawar, 2016). The results of this particular study are significant in the arena of workplace spirituality, particularly in the higher education sector. It is quite hopeful to perceive that a substantial quantity of scientists recognizes and appreciate the presence of a holistic mindset in employees through the cultivation of a spiritual organizational climate. For example, organizations and academic institutions are organizing seminars and workshops on different kinds of meditation and mindfulness, setting up yoga rooms and activity centers to encourage students, faculty to exhibit their innate talents and ideas thereby developing the platform for promoting innovative workplaces. Workplace spirituality endorses intellectual and emotive association with individual organizations which strengthens dedication with a strong sense of accomplishment. Spiritual practices encourage realizing personal self-actualization needs. Besides professional gratification, the spillover effect of workplace spirituality improves social communication amid working professionals empowering a work culture for generating a cohesive life cycle to cherish peacefully throughout a lifetime. Recent studies were conducted

that concentrated upon creative work conduct (Bantha and Nayak, 2021), organizational justice (Sharma and Kumra, 2020), and individual-related work (Rabell and Bastons, 2020).

Today's higher academic institutions are altering to provide faculties with ample opportunities for enhancing their spiritual wellness and augmenting professional well-being at the academic workplace. It has become inevitable for higher academic learning organizations to nurture a dynamic and agile teaching workforce who observe life positively and exhibit an open mind to gather spiritual wisdom for personal and professional development, have the requisite teaching aptitude for taking logical decisions, welcome innovative and creative ideas, interact with students freely in a positive manner to understand their needs, are flexible enough to embrace new scientific technologies and up-skill their teaching competencies, spontaneously accept new responsibilities and confront challenges, resilient enough to bounce back from setbacks and finally acclimatize with the academic working environment. Recent studies focused on the influence of WS on academicians' work attitudes in tourism and hospitality institutions (Soliman et al., 2021) and minimizing deviant behaviors in Indonesian academic work settings (Amin et al., 2021). Workforce agility in knowledge enterprises is not feasible in absence of inherently inspired teaching professionals. Teachers' work performance will be stimulated by the presence of an ethical organizational climate, predominant practices, and assorted people. Hence, faculties must be redesigned under the influence of spiritual practices and positive psychological capital to attain flexibility of mind and body, augment mindful leadership and positive environment inside the classroom, handle various problems strategically by maintaining calmness and inner peace. The agile teaching workforce embraces learning with an open mind to augment their personal and professional growth while focusing upon their analytical capabilities and constantly changing academic work environments. Their willingness to accept new challenges and work obligations make them unique in every sense. When teachers get completely engrossed in their teaching job their intrinsic drive and self-efficacy increase which contribute to their resilience and strength by enhancing their self-

worth. Academic institutions are unable to get nimble in absence of genuinely motivated teaching professionals. Teaching effectiveness improves when teachers experience happiness in teaching, maintain cordial relationships with students and faculty colleagues, have a meaningful purpose at work, and take independent logical decisions that result in emotional enrichment. In presence of ethical workplace culture in learning organizations, mainstream practices, and varied student communities the teacher performance increases. To imbibe a work culture of innovation and ingenuity among teaching professionals, the management administration of universities can frame policies that are favorable to faculties. Recently, few studies concentrated upon the barriers teachers face in virtual classrooms (Storme et al., 2020). Workplace spirituality inculcates a sense of compassion and when influenced by positive psychological resources assists teaching professionals to enhance their professional well-being at the academic workplace.

## 10. LIMITATIONS AND AMBIT FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is vital to reckon the various weaker facets of our research. They are nicely represented as follows:

1. The survey research was carried out on a sample of faculties working in a few public and private universities in the higher education sector in India which is not adequate to be generalized across other populations.

2. The study has utilized only the self-reported survey questionnaire method. Longitudinal studies must be carried out further to better understand the relationship among the variables.

3. It is essential to cross-validate the research in different education sectors for its worldwide acceptance through establishing its significance in diverse cultural contexts with manifold approaches that involve perspectives from immediate supervisors, peer group discussions, and also face-to-face interactions.

4. The current research has concentrated solely upon knowledge workers within a specific industry. Future researchers can take different domains of expertise, where creativity is a prerequisite, in various industries. To expand the practical application of the relationship of workplace spirituality dimensions with different factors of professional well-being of teaching professionals, future research must make pathways in other service sectors like tourism, hospitality, telecommunications, banking, and healthcare, etc.

5. To handle crises faced globally like the circumstances we are undergoing due to the outbreak of the COVID pandemic, it is necessary to develop and validate scales that determine the agility of teaching professionals and augment their workplace well-being in diverse cultures worldwide.

6. A mixed methodology study comprising of both qualitative and quantitative research designs is necessary to provide notable insights into understanding the mediating role of positive psychological capital on professional well-being variables.

7. The present study is mainly carried among academic staff of universities. Shortly, studies on WS and workplace well-being must be carried among samples from non-academic staff and even administrators of top management level of academic institutions.

8. A vital limitation of the present research is that we have considered only three dimensions i.e. joy of teaching, connectedness, and teaching efficacy as parameters for determining teachers' professional well-being in the Indian context. Future studies can explore more dimensions of teachers' professional well-being both in the offline and virtual modes of teaching. Teaching workforce agility can be considered an important factor of professional well-being and empirical validation can be done to validate the same. Recently, systematic reviews on workforce agility have been indicated in a few studies (Junior and Saltorato, 2021; Salmen and Festing, 2021), and further an empirical study mentioned the enablers of workforce agility in engineering institutions (Menon and Suresh, 2021).

9. The present study can be further extended by carrying out empirical validation research exploring the mediating role of psychological empowerment for influencing workforce agility of academicians in learning organizations as proposed by Paul et al. (2020).

10. Finally, a comparison of public and private organizations across varied sectors and perceptions from different levels of managerial hierarchy can expand the realm of workplace spirituality for better comprehending the influence on professional well-being.

11. Future studies can be conducted in different cultural contexts and work settings. Professionals observe the work environment as evocative when they can open their minds and express their inner self at the workplace. Organizations that hunt for ideal human expansion should estimate the reimbursements of what a spiritual workplace can offer and introduce necessary initiatives to nurture the same.

## 11. CONTRIBUTION OF THE THESIS

The current study has expanded the understanding of teaching professionals, scientists on vital constructs like workplace spirituality, positive psychological capital, and dimensions of professional well-being.

1. The present research is a pioneer in offering a causal linkage between workplace spirituality and the professional well-being of academicians in the higher education sector in the Indian context.

2. The current study reported the findings concerning the improvement of the professional well-being of teaching professionals in higher education. This research has opened avenues for exploring more parameters concerning the professional development of teaching professionals even at school levels thereby adding to the extant literature on positive psychology in the academic field.

3. The present study has focused on developing the spiritual awareness of academicians and developing a holistic mindset while working in learning organizations.

4. The dimensions of teachers' professional well-being are quite relevant in today's context and acknowledged by teaching professionals even in the corporate world those who are engaged in training and development departments.

5. The study has notably reported the mediating role of positive psychological capital in influencing the relationship between workplace spirituality and professional well-being at the academic workplace.

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